

Public Testimony Before the Joint Education Committee

Regarding Raised HB 5357 –

A Deaf Child Bill of Rights

March 5, 2012

Good Afternoon.

Senator Stillman and Representative Fleischman, Co-Chairs and Committee Members:

I am Patricia E. Wilson and I reside in Newington, CT.

When there were 15 minutes left for any Deaf person to give a testimony, since the interpreters had to leave at 2:00 p.m., I grabbed this opportunity to express my support for HB 5357.

Representative Fleischman requested me to submit my testimony.

Eleven years ago I moved to Connecticut from Massachusetts, I formerly worked as a part time Sub Teacher at the American School for the Deaf. Also, I worked as American Sign Language Teacher at three different public schools as part of the Outreach Program. My experiences out there indicated a lack of Deaf-Friendly Environments. It means that deaf and hard of hearing children had limited access to language exposure like hearing students in Education; participated in sports and peer social interactions in the school activities.

I grew up at a school for the deaf which had an educational environment that met my academic, sports And social needs. That is the Deaf-Friendly Environment.

Often School Administrators focus on budgetary costs, thus underserved deaf and hard of hearing students' educational needs out there.

It is important to pass this proposed law – HB 5357.

Thank you.